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Broadcasting Mar 6

Vol. 116 No. 10

February sweeps... CBS's winning western, *Lonesome Dove*, pushes network into second place, but NBC remains on top with fourth consecutive sweeps victory. **PAGE 27.**

Staying in the race... Telephone association's president says telco-cable issue is gaining momentum. **PAGE 30.**

Diamond appraisal... Major League Baseball expects to earn $478 million from

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL®

national and local radio and TV agreements in 1989—18.6% increase over last year's total. BROADCASTING's annual look at the sport's Fifth Estate connection begins on **PAGE 40.**

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As Fifth Estate prepares for National Association of Broadcasters convention, BROADCASTING focuses on various technological offerings that will occupy equipment exhibit there. This week: AM stereo, digital audio tape, NRSC and FMX.

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broadcasters and cable programing services (BROADCASTING, Oct. 31, 1988). Recommendation will be expanded to cover local signals if FCC Commissioner Patricia Diaz Dennis comes through with vote, which she is withholding until "editorial changes" are made.

What Congress will do is unknown. At very least, if it decides to pass law requiring local signal carriage, it will probably also preserve copyright license for signals.

On Jan. 3 House Telecommunications Subcommittee member John Bryant (D-Tex.) reintroduced bill he offered in last Congress (BROADCASTING, April 4, 1988) to condition compulsory license on whether cable operator is carrying local broadcast signals. Senate Copyright Subcommittee Chairman Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.) revived measure from last Congress which is virtually identical to Bryant's bill.

Direct Broadcast Satellites

Eight applicants to launch Direct Broadcast Satellites (DBS) believe that high-power Ku-band birds will make possible direct-to-home television reception by consumers owning affordably small receiving dishes. Most of those applicants agree on need to bring together "business system" including consumer equipment manufacturers, programers and cable operators, latter as likely retailers to home market.

HBO parent company, Time Inc., in last quarter of 1988, wrote down value of HBO-GE Americom two-satellite DBS co-venture, Crimson Satellite Associates, by $35 million—third of original value. HBO already provides Ku-band feeds of its programing via Satcom K-1, K-3, and eventually K-4, would serve both cable and direct-to-home markets. Crimson has asked that FCC reconsider denied request to increase K-3 power from 45 watts to 60 watts (considered minimum power necessary to reach mass-marketable four-foot receiving dishes). Denial could be death blow to Crimson plans.

Hughes Communications has filed comments opposing FCC proposal to assign pairs of DBS slots—one east, one west, each serving only half of U.S.—to create most efficient use of spectrum. Hughes proposes 32 channels of TV to entire nation via two birds at one orbital position beginning in 1992 "timeframe." It believes 200-watt DBS birds will enable reception of video programing by affordable one-foot downlinks, thereby expanding consumer home satellite market well beyond current two million. With applicant comments split on paired slots proposal, FCC staff expect review of comments and replies to take "several months" and do not discount possibility that, due to spectrum shortage, comparative process may have to be devised.

FCC extension granted late last year gave Dominion Video Satellite and Hubbard Broadcasting's United States Satellite Broadcasting—among those granted permits with six-year expirations in December 1982—four more years—until Dec. 4, 1992.

Indecency

Implementing stringent indecency law signed by President Reagan last fall (BROADCASTING, Oct. 3, 1988), FCC unanimously adopted new policy that prohibits "indecent" broadcasts 24 hours per day. But policy and underlying law are being challenged in courts on First Amendment grounds by coalition of broadcasting and public-interest groups, including such diverse groups as National Association of Broadcasters and Action for Children's Television. On Jan. 23, three-judge panel of U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington granted request by coalition for stay of Jan. 27 effective date of 24-hour ban (BROADCASTING, Jan. 30).

U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington had affirmed FCC's earlier indecency enforcement policy based on premise that FCC could not ban indecency, but could channel it to times of day when few children were in audience. But court remanded case to commission to justify midnight-to-6 a.m. "safe harbor." In light of congressional action, FCC will not go ahead with its remand rulemaking.

BY THE NUMBERS

Summary of broadcasting and cable

BROADCASTING			
SERVICE	ON AIR	CP's [1]	TOTAL [2]
Commercial AM	4,934	265	5,199
Commercial FM	4,167	653	4,820
Educational FM	1,378	256	1,634
Total Radio	10,479	1,174	11,653
FM translators	1,676	410	2,086
Commercial VHF TV	545	22	567
Commercial UHF TV	515	233	748
Educational VHF TV	120	6	126
Educational UHF TV	217	29	246
Total TV	1,397	290	1,687
VHF LPTV	300	205	505
UHF LPTV	324	1,508	1,832
Total LPTV	624	1,713	2,337
VHF translators	2,721	116	2,837
UHF translators	2,106	437	2,543

CABLE†	
Total subscribers	49,538,000
Homes passed	73,900,000
Total systems	8,000
Household penetration†	54.8%
Pay cable penetration	32%

* Includes off-air licenses. † Penetration peraentages are of TV household universe of 90.4 million. [1] Construction permit. [2] Instructional TV fixed service. [3] Studio-transmitter link.

Mergers and Acquisitions

■ MSO's United Cable Television Corp. and United Artists Communications Inc. said Feb. 9 that they had reached an agreement in principle on revised terms of their expected merger to form new company, United Artists Entertainment Co. (UAE). Companies had said in January that they would be unable to meet Feb. 28 merger deadline and were reexamining their definitive merger agreement signed in March 1988 and amended in September 1988. Under that agreement, current United Artists stockholders would exchange each share for one share each of UAE class A and class B common stock. United Cable stockholders would have option to receive either cash or unit of stock and right to sell that stock to Tele-Communications Inc. at specified times in the future. Under terms of new agreement, cash price for United Cable shares has been raised 10%, to $37.50. TCI, which owns about 41% of United Cable and 66% of United Artists, would own a majority of newly formed UAE. Other aspects of merger are still under discussion, according to United Artists spokesman.

□ Rogers Communications Inc. announced Aug. 9, 1988, that it had agreed to sell its U.S. subsidiary, RCA Cablesystems Holding Co., to a subsidiary of Houston-based utility Houston Industries Inc. Price was $1.265 billion for the systems serving roughly 525,000 subscribers in Laredo and San Antonio, both Texas; Minneapolis; Portland, Ore., and Orange County, Calif. Houston Industries board approved purchase Aug. 16. To raise capital for

■ **March 16**—*American Women in Radio and Television, Southern California chapter*, meeting featuring Dr. Irene Kassorla, radio and TV personality. Hyatt on Sunset, Los Angeles.

March 17—Deadline for entries in 12th annual Hometown USA Video Festival, recognizing "outstanding local programs produced for or by local origination and public, educational and governmental access operations," sponsored by *National Federation of Local Cable Programmers*. Information: (916) 456-0757.

■ **March 17-18**—*Radio-Television News Directors Association* regional conference. Boston. Information: (202) 659-6510.

■ **March 19-20**—*National Academy of Cable Programming* local programing seminar. Radisson Park Terrace hotel, Washington. Information: (202) 775-3611.

March 20-*Academy of Television Arts and Sciences* forum luncheon. Speaker: Howard Stringer, president, CBS Broadcast Group. Beverly Hilton, Los Angeles. Information: (818) 953-7575.

March 21—*American Advertising Federation* spring government affairs conference. Speakers include Andrea Mitchell, NBC chief congressional correspondent; Representative Tom Tauke (R-Iowa), and Federal Trade Commissioner Terry Calvani. Willard hotel, Washington. Information: (202) 898-0089.

March 21—"Directing Live Sports," second in four-part series of seminars examining "work and achievements of television directors in New York," sponsored by *Museum of Broadcasting* and *Directors Guild of America*. Museum, New York. Information: (212) 752-7684.

■ **March 21**—*Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau* sales orientation seminar. CAB offices, New York. Information: (212) 751-7770.

March 21-23—*Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association STTI* satellite communications trade show. Bally's, Las Vegas. Information: (800) 654-9276 or (703) 549-6990.

March 22—Radio station acquisition seminar, sponsored by *National Association of Broadcasters*. Park Lane hotel, New York. Information: (202) 429-5420.

March 22—*Broadcast Pioneers* Mike Award dinner. Plaza hotel, New York. Information: (212) 586-2000.

■ **March 22**—*National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, New York chapter*, drop-in luncheon. Speakers: Phil Beuth, VP, early morning, Capcities/ABC, and Jack Reilly, executive producer, ABC's *Good Morning America*. Topic: Update on early morning television. Copacabana, New York. Information: (212) 765-2450.

■ **March 22**—Second annual *Women in Cable (New York chapter)* career day. Viacom conference center, New York. Information: (212) 889-4670.

Errata

Feb. 18 story on election of new Corporation for Public Broadcasting Chairman Ken Towery incorrectly linked CPB action on Inspector General Act with separate General Accounting Office audit issue. **CPB does not, it said, lose its status as private nonprofit corporation as result of IGA.**

□

Citylight Communications, one of two competing applicants for Fox Television's KTTV(TV) Los Angeles, **was mistakenly characterized as "Hispanic group" in Feb. 20 article**. President of corporation is Dennis Hernandez, but he and other Hispanic male together hold just 18.5% of stock. Control (64%) is now in hands of Lawrence Daniels Jr., white attorney. Attorney for Citylight said company plans to bring in additional investors. After application is amended to reflect change of ownership—by March 14—Citylight will be minority controlled, but not necessarily Hispanic controlled.

□

Feb. 27 "In Brief" said Emmis Broadcasting claimed right to buy both of independents owned by Outlet Communications affiliate Atlin Communications. **Emmis made offer for WXIN(TV) Indianapolis, but not Atlin's WATL(TV) Atlanta.**

March 23—*National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters* fifth annual Communications Awards dinner. Sheraton Washington hotel, Washington. Information: Ava Sanders, (202) 463-8970.

■ **March 23**—*MTV Networks'* local advertising sales workshop, open to cable systems, interconnects, ad sales/marketing management and account executives. Crystal City Marriott, Arlington, Va. Information: Elizabeth Miropol, (212) 944-4754.

March 24-25—11th annual Black College Radio convention, sponsored by *Collegiate Broadcasting Group*. Paschal's hotel, Atlanta. Information: (404) 523-6136.

March 28—"Directing Talk Shows," third in four-part series of seminars examining "work and achievements of television directors in New York," sponsored by *Museum of Broadcasting* and *Directors Guild of America*. Museum, New York.

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□

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NBC wins week 23, CBS takes news

NBC won the prime time week (ended Feb. 26) with a 16.2 rating and a 25.9 share. CBS was second with a 14.6/23.2. ABC closed out the week with an 11.7/18.6.

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Nielsen	Net		
1	27.2/42	N	Cosby Show
2	24.9/38	N	Different World
3	24.2/35	A	Roseanne
4	23.8/38	C	60 Minutes
5	23.3/35	N	Cheers
6	22.8/33	C	Murder, She Wrote
7	22.5/38	N	Golden Girls
8	21.9/33	A	Who's the Boss?
9	21.2/33	C	CBS Sunday Movie
10	19.8/30	N	Dear John
11	19.7/34	N	Empty Nest
12	19.6/32	N	L.A. Law
13	19.2/30	N	In the Heat of the Night
14	18.6/28	N	Matlock
15	18.5/34	N	Hunter
16	18.4/27	N	ALF
17	17.9/30	C	Dallas
18	17.5/28	A	Full House
19	17.5/27	N	Unsolved Mysteries
20	17.2/28	C	Knots Landing
21	17.2/30	N	Amen
22	16.8/26	N	NBC Monday Movie
23	16.7/28	A	Perfect Strangers
24	16.5/24	N	Hogan Family
25	16.1/24	N	Night Court
26	16.0/25	A	Growing Pains
27	16.0/26	C	Grammy Awards
28	15.6/28	N	227
29	14.8/22	A	Head of the Class
30	14.6/22	A	MacGyver
31	14.6/24	C	CBS Tuesday Movie
32	14.4/25	N	Midnight Caller
33	14.3/23	A	Mr. Belvedere
34	14.0/22	A	ABC Mystery Movie
35	14.0/21	C	Murphy Brown
36	13.9/21	N	My Two Dads
37	13.9/22	N	NBC Sunday Movie
38	13.7/21	A	ABC Sunday Movie
39	13.4/20	C	Designing Women
40	13.3/20	N	Family Ties
41	13.1/19	C	Newhart
42	13.1/22	N	Nightingales
43	13.0/21	A	Just the Ten of Us
44	13.0/19	C	Kate and Allie
45	12.8/22	A	20/20
46	12.5/20	A	ABC Tuesday Movie
47	12.5/18	F	Married...With Children
48	11.8/19	N	Father Dowling Mysteries
49	11.5/17	C	Paradise
50	11.5/17	F	America's Most Wanted
51	11.5/17	N	Day by Day
52	11.3/19	N	NBC Friday Movie
53	11.1/18	C	Beauty and the Beast
54	10.6/16	A	Wonder Years
55	10.5/16	C	48 Hours
56	10.3/16	A	Dynasty
57	9.9/17	A	China Beach
58	9.8/15	A	Hooperman
59	9.5/16	A	Man Called Hawk
60	9.2/14	C	Tour of Duty
61	9.2/15	N	Magical World of Disney
62	9.0/16	A	Mission: Impossible
63	8.3/14	C	Dolphin Cove
64	8.1/13	F	21 Jump Street
65	8.0/15	C	West 57th
66	7.9/13	C	Almost Grown
67	7.8/11	A	Beverly Hills 75th Anniversary
68	7.3/12	A	Great Circuses of the World
69	6.8/12	C	TV 101
70	5.6/8	F	Garry Shandling's Show
71	5.4/9	A	Heartbeat
72	5.2/8	A	Fine Romance
73	4.7/9	A	Murphy's Law
74	4.6/7	F	Tracey Ullman Show
75	4.5/8	F	Reporters
76	3.4/5	F	Duet
77	3.2/5	F	Beyond Tomorrow

TNT buys Sheen-produced feature

Story, rejected by broadcast networks, concerns atomic testing in 1950's and will star Sheen and Emilio Estevez

Actor-producer Martin Sheen is bringing his political activism to the television screen on March 8 when *Nightbreaker* premieres on Turner Network Television. A fictionalized account of the U.S. Army's testing of atomic weapons in Nevada in the 1950's, the two-hour, $3 million project was, according to the filmmakers, rejected by the studios and networks because of its controversial nature.

Produced by Symphony Pictures, formed by Sheen and William Greenblatt six years ago, *Nightbreaker* was adapted by T.S. Cook (whose credits include co-authorship of "The China Syndrome") from Howard Rosenberg's 1980 historical novel *Atomic Soldiers*. Cook brought the script to Symphony very early in the company's history. "We had the script for a few years," said Sheen during a Los Angeles press tour, "and we did try to get it out on the commercial broadcast networks, and never really got any interest." Asked if the networks gave any reason for passing, Sheen said: "No, but I think it's obvious...they do controversial themes when those themes are safe to deal with and they can still sell their products."

Cook, who served as the telefilm's co-executive producer (Sheen was executive producer with Jeffrey Auerbach), proceeded to call "every studio and film player" on his own, but was unsuccessful in obtaining a deal. "They all said it was lovely writing but not for us," he told BROADCASTING, "and I knew the networks wouldn't want it because of its political and critical nature. I had this project for seven years and couldn't sell it."

Last year, Ted Turner, a fan of Sheen's, approached Symphony looking for original projects for TNT, his new basic cable network. "He said he was particularly interested in material more controversial than network fare," said Greenblatt, Symphony's president and the show's producer. "We remembered *Nightbreaker*, called Tom Cook, and found it was still available." The script was sent to TNT on a Thursday or Friday, said Greenblatt, and by Monday "we had a go on the picture."

"We found *Nightbreaker* to be a socially responsible, moving project," said Scott Sassa, TNT executive vice president, "with a nice story and real good characters, but also an overriding theme important to society today." TNT, TBS and CNN are engaged in what Sassa characterizes as "monumental" on-air support of *Nightbreaker*. According to Sandy Knox, manager of on-air promotion, TNT is showing five- and two-minute behind-the-scene fills, 30-, 20-, 15- and 10-second promo spots aired at least once an hour last week, and 60-, 20- and 10-second spots are being added this week. In addition, TBS and CNN have been showing six spots a day for the last two weeks, with 10 a day appearing on Headline News. Heavy emphasis is also being placed on print advertising in "the usual TV suspects," said Sassa.

Due to the uncharted waters of presenting controversial material on a recently launched service, Sassa is wary of predicting viewer response. "I think that this type of programing right now is a tad incongruous because people haven't gotten accustomed to it," he said. "I would suspect that this is a property that's going to be an evergreen for us; it will play subsequently down the line for us just as well. In a roundabout way I guess I'm saying I don't want to put our hopes too high on what this might do."

Directed by Peter Markle, *Nightbreaker* stars Sheen and his son Emilio Estevez. The story focuses on Dr. Alexander Brown, a former army psychologist turned neurologist who returns to Las Vegas for the first time in 30 years to receive an award. While there, he is forced to confront his past participation in atomic testing. Shot very close to the original test sites during late summer last year (Symphony had an interim agreement with the Writers Guild of America), the filmmakers incorporated actual Army footage of test explosions into the drama.

Nightbreaker also stars Lea Thompson, Melinda Dillon and Joe Pantoliano. The role of Dr. Brown was originally intended for one actor, but Cook rewrote the script specifically for Sheen and Estevez, who portrays the younger Brown during the 1950's. "The action is divided into 85% past, 15% present," according to Auerbach.

Asked if he would approach the networks with future projects, Sheen said, "Oh, sure. We try it all the time.... I'll give them as many chances as I can."

Symphony changed its name from SheenGreenblatt a year ago because, according to Greenblatt, "our intention is to become a much broader full service production entity not relying on Martin Sheen's acting skills, although in many of the things we take on he is involved in that way or directing."

About two-thirds of their current in-house projects do not involve Sheen in a direct way. Among these are:

- A mini-series in development at CBS, to be directed by Jeremy Kagan, based on the true story of a group of children lost in Russia during the Russian Revolution and rescued by an American reporter.
- A feature in development starring Al Pacino as a reporter going after a fascistic big city police department.
- A possible series deal with Garson Kanin from a "dramady" originally written for the late Ruth Gordon. Now scripted as a one-hour film, no network is yet involved.

Previous Symphony projects include the features *Da*, *Judgment in Berlin*, and several CBS *Schoolbreak Specials*. □

Baseball on radio and TV: $478 million in '89

Major League Baseball this year expects to collect $478 million in national and local radio and television (including regional broadcast and cable TV) revenue—a rise of $75 million, or 18.6% of last year's $403 million total. According to league figures, the jump is slightly higher than the 15.4% average annual increase over the 1984 through 1989 seasons.

For ABC-TV and NBC-TV, which paid about $200 million last year, maintaining their identities as the MLB networks for one more season will cost them, together, $240 million in 1989—a 20% balloon-year increase in the final season of concurrent six-year deals. Both networks say they will lose money on baseball in 1989. The CBS Radio Network, entering the last year of its own five-year deal, will likely again pay around one-fifth of its $32 million total contract, or about $6 million-$6.5 million.

MLB revenue figures show local rights keeping pace with national rights revenue, also rising just over 18%, from approximately $196 million in 1988 to $232 million—$478 million, minus the network TV and radio fees—this season. Although those local rightsholders will collectively pay almost as much as the networks, they were virtually unanimous late last month in saying their associations with the league remain directly profitable from advertising revenue, as well as indirectly profitable, through the promotional value of being identified with a market's team.

The $478 million figure is slightly more than double the $236 million paid by radio and TV just five seasons ago, in 1984. During the intervening years—all of them having long-term network con-

tracts, as well as many long-term local contracts, in common—the figure rose 22% in 1985, to $288 million; 4% in 1986, to $300 million; 11% in 1987, to $333 million, and 21% last season, to $403 million. The number of games aired on all forms of television, said MLB, has also risen, from 2,356 games in 1985 to 2,661 games in 1988.

During separate interviews conducted by BROADCASTING late last month, baseball and network executives commented on questions involving rights fee trends, experiments in MLB television exposure and other issues raised by the long-term $1.1 billion CBS and $400 million ESPN deals that begin next year (see page 42).

NBC and ABC: Farewell season

The networks' extra-season roles have alternated between NBC-TV and ABC-TV each year of the current contract. In 1989, NBC will pay approximately $115 million for rights to the All Star Game and both the National and American League Championship Series (LCS) and 32 regular season games. After 32 years of Saturday afternoon games, and 42 consecutive seasons of MLB coverage, NBC expects to lose money for the first time during the current contract, said NBC Sports President Arthur Watson.

ABC will pay about $125 million to air the World Series and eight regular season games, all in prime time, and will likely suffer more than NBC from its own balloon-year fee hike. In previous years of the current contract, at lower annual rights installments, *Monday Night Baseball*, which this year becomes *Thursday Night Baseball*, had never made a profit, said the network.

Regular season advertising time (MLB games average 54 30-second spots) should draw between $40,000 and $45,000 per spot, said one network source, while World Series spots go for $270,000 or more. Neither network would reveal how much of their inventories had been sold by last week. Long championship series could also recoup some NBC losses. Said Watson: "Baseball is well ahead—well ahead—of last year's pace in terms of sellout. And last year was a good year."

A seven-game World Series, especially one involving major market teams, would provide ABC Sports with damage control. Arbitron's Broadcast Advertisers Reports bore out several network sources' contentions that the World Series have generally earned more advertising revenue than have the playoff-All-Star seasons, assuming average-length World Series and LCS's (five or six games each). In 1987, said Arbitron, ABC earned $120,463,500 from a seven-game World Series, while NBC gained only $77,723,600 from the All Star Game and five-game and seven-game LCS's (with all figures representing pre- and post- and in-game time). In 1988, a five-game World Series brought NBC $93,492,000, while ABC's coverage of the All Star Game, a four-game American League Championship Series and seven-game National LCS earned $91,546,000.

Within their total MLB schedules, NBC earned $145,950,100 from advertisers, while ABC took in $120,434,200, in 1987; last season, NBC earned $163,557,330 and ABC, $146,538,100, according to Arbitron. The profit margins for both, of course, have been further cut by production costs, currently said to average $10 million per season, and other overhead.

ABC-TV: Goodbye Monday, hello Thursday

ABC-TV will provide this year's biggest network baseball carriage surprise by broadcasting all eight (formerly) *Monday Night Baseball* games on eight consecutive Thursday nights, beginning June 8. "It is as efficient a counterprograming to *Cosby* as exists," said David Downs, vice president, programing, ABC Sports. The identity of ABC's *Monday Night Football* drove the original decision to place baseball coverage on that night, he said, but "ultimately, we decided there was nothing magic in Monday night."

The decision to create *ABC Thursday Night Baseball* was made

Who's on (the air) first around the leagues

AMERICAN LEAGUE EAST

Team	*TV originator and affiliates*	*Radio originator and affiliates*	*Cable originator*
Baltimore Orioles	WMAR 10	WBAL 40	Home Team Sports
Boston Red Sox	WSBK 6	WPLM 81	New Eng Sports Net
Cleveland Indians	WUAB	WWWE 28	none
Detroit Tigers	WDIV 4	WJR 40	Pro Am Sports Systems
Milwaukee Brewers	WCGV 6	WTMJ 67	none
New York Yankees	WPIX 10	WABC 50	Madison Sq Garden Net
Toronto Blue Jays	CTV 21	CJCL 65	The Sports Network

AMERICAN LEAGUE WEST

California Angels	KTLA 15	KMPC 22	Z Channel
Chicago White Sox	WFLD 5	WFLD 30	SportsChannel Chicago
Kansas City Royals	WDAF 12	WIBW 132	none none
Minnesota Twins	WCCO 7	WCCO 65	Midwest Commun
Oakland A's	KPIX 8	KSFO 14	none
Seattle Mariners	KSTW 8	KIRO 30	none
Texas Rangers	KTVT 15	WBAP 18	

NATIONAL LEAGUE EAST

Team	*TV originator and affiliates*	*Radio originator and affiliates*	*Cable originator*
Chicago Cubs	WGN 30	WGN 83	WGN-TV as superstation
Montreal Expos	CBC-TV	CJAD 9 CKAC 30	The Sports Network
New York Mets	WWOR 14	WFAN 22	SportsChannel (NY) SportsChannel Florida
Philadelphia Phillies	WTAF 2	WCAU 23	Prism
Pittsburgh Pirates	KDKA 7	KDKA 44	KBL Ent Net
St. Louis Cardinals	KPLR 32	KMOX 130	CenCom Cable

NATIONAL LEAGUE WEST

Atlanta Braves	WTBS	WSB 93	WTBS as superstation
Cincinnati Reds	WLWT 23	WLW 75	none
Houston Astros	KTXH 17	KTRH 45	Home Sports Ent
Los Angeles Dodgers	KTTV	KABC 30 KWKW Span-5	Z Channel
San Diego Padres	KUSI 10	KFMB 12 XEXX Span-17	Cox Cable
San Francisco Giants	KTVU 5	KNBR 10	Giantvision

before CBS outbid ABC and NBC for the 1990-1993 MLB contract (BROADCASTING, Dec. 19, 1988) and was "not a backlash thing," Downs said, conceding that ABC Sports might find Thursday prime time programing "too tough to compete with." Part of the counterprograming logic, he said, is also based on offering programing that is substantially different from the competition's.

However, ABC may have little to lose in taking the risk and may benefit by matching up ABC and NBC movies of the week on Monday nights, judging by Nielsen figures compiled over the nine weeks beginning May 30, 1988. Against a Thursday NBC lineup of *Cosby*, *A Different World*, *Cheers* and *Night Court* (often the top four shows of the week, together averaging a 17.3 rating/32 household share)—the *ABC Thursday Night Movie* averaged only an 8.5/15 ratings/share. During those same weeks, *ABC Monday Night Baseball* averaged 7.9/15 against the *NBC Monday Night Movie*, which averaged 14.5/26—nearly as high as, but perhaps a less formidable foe for an ABC movie than, NBC's Thursday lineup.

ABC also made one on-air personality change when late last month it signed Gary Thorne of WFAN(AM) New York (the Mets radio announcer from 1985 to 1988) to replace Gary Bender as ABC-TV's B game play-by-play announcer, teamed with Joe Morgan. ABC said its A game team, Al Michaels, Jim Palmer and Tim McCarver, will reprise their 1988 regular season, and probably also post-season, roles.

NBC, beginning April 8, will carry 30 regular season games over 26 summer Saturdays, as it has the past four seasons, even though NBC has seen a steady decline in its average rating/share over the 1985-1988 period. The Saturday games earned a 6.5/21 in 1985, 6.4/20 in 1986, 6.1/20 in 1987 and 5.6/18 last season. In addition to the Saturday games, including four doubleheaders (April 15, May 13, June 17 and July 29), the NBC schedule will include two prime time regular season games, Friday, July 7, and Tuesday, Aug. 1.

Tom Seaver, who will become Yankees color commentator this season, will also team up with NBC's Vin Scully to call the regular season games for the network, replacing Joe Garagiola, who departed after last year's World Series. Bob Costas and Tony Kubek will call each week's B game. Seaver and Scully will also team up with others for NBC's All Star and post-season games.

The future of baseball and 'free TV'

MLB, the broadcast networks and local stations debate whether the current situation is just part of a cycle or the beginning of a new era of more cable and higher fees

NBC and ABC sports programing executives expressed disappointment late last month over seeing their networks' associations with Major League Baseball coming to at least a temporary end after the 1989 season, and both expressed somewhat cautious confidence that the sports rights picture will remain "cyclical," in terms of who wins future contracts and for just how much money. Trends away from 'free TV' and toward escalating rights fees in all sports, they conceded, may prove more realthan apparent.

CBS-TV and Major League Baseball, differing with the other two networks on the merits of the league's new combined $1.6 billion national rights contracts, also took issue with the perception that the next year may prove the 1990-93 national broadcast-cable package either "an aberration or...the rocket that launches another era of rising fees."

CBS: Good deal or bad?

As ABC and NBC say good-bye to the game for four years, 1990 through 1993, CBS is preparing to pay a reported $1.1 billion to MLB for exclusive rights to the World Series, the American and National League Championship Series (LCS) and 12 regular season games each season during that period (BROADCASTING, Dec. 19, 1988). ABC reportedly offered MLB more than $500 million, which would have held its annual fee to around the current $125 million. NBC, which has not missed a year airing MLB since the late 1940's, bid something under $750 million, second to CBS's winning $1.1 billion. MLB will earn another $400 million over those same four seasons from ESPN, which will carry 175 regular season games on cable, beginning in 1990 (BROADCASTING, Jan. 9).

Although CBS's $250 million fee in 1990 will be only $10 million more than the 1989 fee, Arthur Watson, president, NBC Sports, has called the $1.1 billion CBS contract "irresponsible" because it covers two fewer years and because, in each season, the CBS schedule will be 28 games shorter than the current regular season national schedule—10 prime time games (eight on ABC and two on NBC) and 18 (NBC) weekend day games will disappear.

CBS also made its bid, Watson told BROADCASTING last week, knowing that ABC had been losing money for years, and that both networks would lose money in 1989. The "intangible value" of the association with major events such as the MLB Championship and World Series is "worth a lot," said Watson, "but is it worth a $100 million difference?"

To the contrary, said Jay Rosenstein, vice president, programing, CBS Sports, some of the values of the CBS package, beyond direct ad revenue, will be immediately tangible. "That value is transferred to the network, the affiliates, our entertainment programing. It is a statement to our employes." The affiliates, he said, "will not have to go uphill against post-season baseball any more when they are debuting new product in the fall. Now they will be at the top of the hill looking down. The strategic value of October," when new entertainment programing competes head-to-head with the MLB post season, "is tremendous."

Rosenstein said the CBS package also includes an advantage neither ABC nor NBC currently enjoys—one network carrying both the league championships and the World Series in the same season. "The other networks weren't as effusive as us about the LCS's. We thought they belonged on free TV, that they provided continuity into the World Series," he said. "We also have the opportunity to spread out the risk with the potential of 21 postseason games," rather than just the four to seven World

Dissenting trend

Local television rightsholders were nearly unanimous in their optimism about the continued profitability of carrying Major League Baseball—despite the upward trend in national, and some local, rights figures. But at least one radio broadcaster offered a dissenting view on the very basics of most sports rights arrangements.

"We looked around the league a few years ago and saw what was coming," said Ken Dennis, general manager of KSFO(AM) San Francisco, flagship of a 14-station Oakland Athletics radio network. The station saw little sense in maintaining a rights fee system—"broadcasters paying through the nose to take so much risk on how the team would do." While even a losing team will always have its fans, he said, there may not be enough to draw advertisers on board. So before the 1988 season, KSFO(AM) decided to eschew the tradition of buying rights and sell ad time within a number of games and, instead, began selling the broadcast time outright to the team, which sells all the in-game ad spots itself.

"Our point of view focuses on ratings," he said, "not on payment and revenue." Retaining no in-game ad inventory (except for station promos), the station does, however, sell time within its morning manager's show, pre-game talk show, pre-game magazine show, pre-game warmup show, post-game wrapup and around-the-league shows and an evening call-in talk show. "This way," he said, "the team takes the risk on how well the team does, while we take the risk on the broadcasts, and even the worst-case [won-loss] scenario would be bearable for both the team and us." And with a hot team, such as last year's American League champion A's, the station can expand that inventory to include a week-long remote broadcast from spring training (see capsule, page 45).

Series, or eight to 14 LCS, games.

Although he said CBS's existing summer schedule of NBA playoffs, golf, college football and other programing left little room for more than 12 regular season games, he said that CBS also perceived additional lost revenue in a larger regular season MLB schedule.

Indeed, according to Arbitron's Broadcast Advertisers Reports, All Star Game, LCS and World Series coverage, including pre- and post-game programs, has brought in approximately two-thirds of the networks' MLB advertising revenue while accounting for only around one-third of the total national schedule over the past two seasons. In 1987, ABC and NBC together earned $198,187,100 from selling post-season ad spots—accounting for 68% of the $292,488,200 ad revenue for the entire 1987 MLB season, even though the 20 extra-season games accounted for only 33% of the schedule. In 1988, the post-season, accounting for only 35% of the schedule, brought in $185,038,000—60% of a total $310,095,430 in ad revenue for the year.

(The BAR numbers, said Arbitron, come from monitoring spots and plugging in ad rates provided by the networks.)

Taking into account the values cited, said Rosenstein, "CBS placed a value on the exclusivity of the MLB package in such a fashion as perhaps the other networks did not." Declining to say the network would not directly lose money on the contract, he added: "We're confident in the viability and health of the package."

Onward and upward in other sports?

Standing by his charge that the CBS bid was "irresponsible," Watson said the deal sends a message to other sports. "The next 12 months," he said, "will tell if the new MLB deal is an aberration—most rights were declining or remaining flat—or if this is the rocket that launches another era of rising fees. The NCAA is going to say: 'If baseball can get that, what can we get?' " Watson said, noting that current NCAA basketball and National Basketball Association contracts—both CBS's—run out after the 1989-90 seasons. In addition to vying for those, he said, NBC will also be looking at additional college football.

"There is obviously going to be spirited bidding for those contracts, because of the need for the product at the other networks," said Rosenstein, adding that CBS "will be aggressive in protecting rights we already have, particularly the NCAA tournament. We've developed an extremely successful product" with both the tournament and the NBA, which also comes up for renegotiation in 1989, he said. But he disagreed that the 1990-93 contract sets a precedent for other sports rights fees. "Each property is viewed as a separate process. There is one set of circumstances for the Olympics in winter, another for summer Olympics, another for MLB," he said. "We didn't talk about irresponsible bids when NBC bid higher than CBS on [the 1992 summer Olympics in] Barcelona."

David Downs, ABC Sports programing vice president, although confident that history proves the TV-sports relationship "too cyclical for negative sentiments," conceded he is "concerned that the 1990 bid might give the appearance that all sports rights will continue to escalate. The reality is that only a few properties will command the kind of intangible value that we attribute to Major League Baseball or the Olympics. Most sports," he said, "will be negotiated on a fair and pragmatic basis."

Baseball's cable TV exposure

Like Watson, Downs expressed skepticism about what the new mix of national broadcast and cable network schedules will eventually bring CBS, ESPN and the league: "What they [MLB] are seeing is that dealing with cable has radically raised the revenue generated by the TV package. What they have not seen is the long-term exposure picture—the effects of underexposure of the cable universe and shortened network regular season coverage."

MLB director of broadcasting Bryan Burns has spent the past several years trying to predict just that. The league, he said, sought to respond to market and regulatory factors while balancing what has been about a 50-50 national-local rights revenue stream (see story, page 40).

"What has happened with us is a major course correction," he said, describing a "new environment" and bottom line considerations that helped drive the decision to go with CBS and ESPN. MLB "needed to make a certain amount of money. *Monday Night Baseball*, for example, came to a point where it was not financially viable. The public was not watching. The public spoke. If we had been getting a 16 or 17 rating," he said, "maybe you would have seen a different contract."

However, he said, superstation litigation and legislation unfavorable to the league—as well as money—shaped a package that will add 175 cable games to, and subtract 28 network games from, the national schedule. Asked about the "flood" of 175 ESPN games in 1990, he said: "What about the flood of 400 games already there [via superstations, with which the league has no national contracts]? If the government is going to allow a local signal to be sent out across the country without the club's consent, fine; we have to get into the [cable programing] business too. Is exposing four or five teams, all in one league, healthy for the game? We would rather let fans from Tacoma to Tampa see all our teams."

Having "lost in court, ridiculously," over the superstation copyright issue, said Burns, the teams carried by superstations have entered into an agreement with MLB to contribute some extra dollars to the leagues, "but that is an agreement inside the league, having nothing to do with copyright."

Rosenstein, pointing to CBS's experi-

CBS Radio's final baseball season?

Entering the final year of a five-year, $32 million contract, the CBS Radio Network was, as of last week, vying with other networks for the next national radio contract with Major League Baseball. The 1989 season will open with an April 8 doubleheader featuring the World Champion Los Angeles Dodgers at the Atlanta Braves at 3 p.m. ET and the Baltimore Orioles at the Minnesota Twins at 7:45 p.m. ET. Those two broadcasts will once again set the pace for the 26-week regular season; each Saturday the network will feature one early and one late game, with one representing the American League and one representing the National League. The regular season will close Sept. 30. CBS reported that its *Game of the Week* broadcasts last year were heard on 265 affiliate stations.

In addition to regular season games, the CBS Radio Sports schedule will include play-by-play coverage of the All Star Game on July 11 at Anaheim Stadium; the American and National League Championship Series, Oct. 3-12, and the World Series, beginning Oct. 14. The network will also report live from the Baseball Hall of Fame induction ceremonies on July 23 at Cooperstown, N.Y.

Special this year will be a 16-part series of two-minute reports anchored by John Rooney that will feature baseball news, season predictions and interviews with key players and coaches. The series will be fed to affiliates beginning March 27. Returning to the broadcasts will be the "home town" fifth inning, which features local team announcers.

CBS is once again selling its ad inventory in two separate packages: the summer series, consisting of the All Star game and 26 weeks of regular season games, and the fall series package, including the league championships and the World Series. Advertisers this year include Anheuser-Busch, Buick, Isuzu, True Value hardware and Tinactin, according to Steve Youlios, vice president of sales for the CBS Radio Networks. Some advertisers changed marketing strategies this year and decided not to renew, he said, but replacement sponsors have quickly taken their places. The network's sports marketing group has been particularly successful in attracting new advertisers, Youlios added.

Launching the season this year will be sportscaster Brent Musberger with an April 8 pre-game interview with A. Bartlett Giamatti, newly elected baseball commissioner. Musberger is expected to take on the play-by-play job for CBS-TV in 1990. Additional announcers providing CBS Radio Sports coverage will include Johnny Bench, Steve Busby, Jerry Coleman, Gene Elston, Steve Garvey, Jim Hunter and Dick Stockton.

ence carrying the final 33 NCAA basketball tournament games—on the heels of ESPN's carrying 20 earlier tournament games—insisted, "Regular season exposure [on cable] is beneficial to the post season. We think the 175 games on ESPN funnels interest into and enhances" CBS's post-season coverage.

As for the ESPN deal marking only the beginning of a trend toward cable, among those interviewed, none dissented from Watson's prediction that "for the moment—the next three to five years—the major sports events will stay on free TV. Obviously, MLB is there through 1993. You have to see what happens with cable and pay TV."

The local factor

Concerns about stepping on the individual teams' abilities to forge better local packages also shaped the CBS and ESPN deals, said Burns. Before going into last fall's negotiations, "the teams instructed the league to 'give some [game] inventory back to us so we can make local rights agreements.' [MLB] did that" with the new contracts, he said, "more than cutting in half—from over 20, down to seven—the number of national games that would conflict with local schedules," beginning with the 1990 season.

"And, collectively," said Burns, "the number of games on local free TV over the past five years has increased every year"—from 1,485 in 1984 to 1,648 in 1988—while games on local pay also increased from 820 in 1985 to 1,031, in 1988, according to the league. Those local numbers will stay steady or rise slightly in 1989, he said.

Additionally, in designing the ESPN deal, he explained, MLB "put our clubs in the first position." If a game to be aired locally is also on the ESPN schedule, ESPN will have to air another game between other teams in that particular market, leaving the local broadcast or cable TV rightsholder exclusive carriage there. Therefore, he argued, the 'flood' of national games on ESPN will not displace home team games on local broadcast or local cable, and opening more Saturdays in the network schedule on CBS will open the opportunity for further increases in local schedules. "Maybe they balance," he said.

For the most part, local rightsholders appeared to agree, nearly all of them confident in the preeminence of home team interest.

"Actually, our position is enhanced," said Bill Craig, general manager, Midwest Communications, current owner of the Minnesota Twins' local broadcast, cable and radio rights. "There will be no Twins [cable] games in Minnesota, North Dakota or South Dakota except on the Midwest Sports Channel. They will be blacked out inside of the exclusive territory. We feel very comfortable with what's happened on ESPN.

"The more baseball there is out there, the less exclusive is your product, and it will have an impact" on local rights values, said Craig. "But the home team is still the one that's on the front page of the local newspaper and the one that commentators talk about. Even when the Twins are in the cellar, people would rather watch a Twins game than they would the Yankees. The local team is where the power is."

Although ESPN may get the rights to 10-15 Cubs games in 1990, said Jake Fendley, director of sports sales, WGN-TV Chicago, "we broadcast more local games than any other station [152]. We might be affected in the number of games we broadcast, but it won't affect advertising revenues. There is always a place for local telecasts."

Jack Stanfield, Home Sports Entertainment vice president, programing, and executive producer for Texas Rangers cablecasts, concurred: "I think the ESPN deal was a good deal for baseball owners, an additional source of revenue for them for national distribution of the game. But the product in a specific region has its own value. That is established by the number of cable homes and the strength and draw of the team, and I think that's more the deciding factor."

"MLB, somewhere down in its heart," said Kansas City Royals Network Manager Buddy Turner, "is interested in the welfare of the local rightsholder."

But even given an environment in which the single team has "first position," the local broadcaster may still find himself in a fix, said Bill Scaffide, assistant general manager of Cleveland Indians rightsholder, WUAB-TV Lorain, Ohio. "It is very costly for local TV to keep local sports." The franchises, he said, may eventually price "themselves out of local TV."

The preceding two stories were written by Peter Lambert

Major League Baseball team by team

♦California Angels♦

Television broadcast rights to the California Angels are held by KTLA(TV) Los Angeles, in the second year of a five-year contract. KTLA will broadcast 57 games, two preseason, 54 regular season, and the annual game against the Los Angeles Dodgers. Bob Starr and Joe Torre will call the games.

KMPC(AM) Los Angeles, in the second year of a three-year deal, holds radio rights for the Angels and will broadcast all preseason and regular season games, as well as spring training reports. Al Conin and Ken Brett will call the games for KMPC(AM), the flagship for a network of 22 stations in Central and Southern California, as well as Nevada, Arizona and Hawaii. Sales are running way ahead of last year, said a station spokesman, and Anheuser-Busch, Chevrolet, Chevron and TWA are among the major sponsors lined up.

Cable rights to the California Angels are held by Z Channel, purchased late last month by Rainbow Programing Enterprises (BROADCASTING, Feb. 27). It will provide a dual feed in English and Spanish to 110,000 subscribers in the Los Angeles area. The feeds for the Angels will be provided by XPRS(AM) Tijuana, Mexico, which broadcasts the games in Spanish. Z Channel will carry 35 regular season and two preseason games. Joel Meyers will handle play-by-play and Torre will do color commentary.

♦Chicago White Sox♦

Television broadcast rights to the Chicago White Sox are held by WFLD(TV) Chicago, in the third year of a six-year contract. The 71-game schedule includes 67 regular season games, three preseason and the crosstown classic, played against the Chicago Cubs. Major sponsors include Miller Beer and Dodge.

WMAQ(AM) Chicago, holder of the radio rights, is the flagship for the White Sox Radio Network, fed to 30-35 stations in Illinois, Iowa, Indiana and Florida. Pre- and post-game shows will be 10 to 15 minutes on each side, according to Jeff Chardell, WMAQ(AM) general sales manager. Chardell also reported that sales are running slightly ahead of last year. Major sponsors include Miller Beer and Chevrolet. The station will broadcast 178 games, including 162 regular season and the crosstown classic. Tom Rooney, former announcer for WFLD(AM) and Wayne Hagin, an announcer for CBS's *Game of the Week*, will handle the announcing duties.

Cable rights for the White Sox are held by SportsChannel Chicago, in the sixth year of a 10-year contract. SportsChannel will offer 83 regular season games and two exhibition contests to approximately 1.4 million subscribers. Gary Thorn will have play-by-play duties and Tom Paciorek will provide color commentary. SportsChannel will also broadcast a weekly half-hour show, *Sox '89 Weekly, The Jeff Torborg Show*. (Torborg is the team's manager.) Sponsors include Anheuser-Busch and *The Chicago Sun-Times*, Toyota and Chrysler.

♦Kansas City Royals♦

Entering its 15th year as the Kansas City Royals Radio Network flagship—and the first year of a new three-year deal—WIB-

WIBW(AM) Topeka, Kan., has expanded last year's 120-station, 10-state network to 132 stations in 12 states, said Royals network manager Buddy Turner. The 14-year relationship with the team is still "healthy [and] profit-making," he said. Carrying 16 preseason and all 162 regular season games, each complete with a managers show and pre-game, post-game and scoreboard shows, the station has already sold 98% of its national inventory to advertisers including Budweiser, Ford Motors, the Ford Lifetime Service Guarantee, Western Auto, Guy's potato chips, Amoco Oil, Farmers Insurance, True Value Hardware and John Deere, said Turner. The 131 other stations in the network retain one 60-second spot per inning, he said.

On the television side, WDAF-TV Kansas City, Mo., enters the second year of a five-year contract, feeding a dozen stations in Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Iowa, Nebraska and Colorado. In addition to again carrying two preseason and 50 regular season games, the station, said Turner, will produce 12 half-hour *Let It Roll* specials on the team. "We're going to front-load the season a little more this time to draw interest early," carrying five of those specials before opening day, he said. Paul Splittorff and Denny Trease will again provide color and play-by-play, respectively. Boasting "number-two Nielsen and Arbitron numbers in the country last May and July," said Turner, the network has signed on Ford Motor Co., Miller beer and Uniroyal for 1989.

♦Minnesota Twins♦

Midwest Communications, owner of WCCO-AM-TV Minneapolis, starts a new contract this year for the radio, broadcast television, cable and pay-per-view rights to Minnesota Twins baseball. The five-year pact comes amid what WCCO(AM)'s local sales manager, Ray Vecellio, called "tremendous interest in Twins baseball" that has been steadily growing since the team's 1987 championship year.

Midwest will televise a total of 124 Twins games. WCCO-TV will air 34 broadcast television games, and Midwest has contracted independent KITN(TV) Minneapolis to broadcast an additional 26 games on nights that baseball conflicts with network programing on CBS affiliate WCCO-TV. Both the WCCO-TV and KITN games will be fed to the seven-station Twins network.

The 64 other televised games will be available to cable subscribers. Midwest Sports Channel, a basic service, which signed on last Wednesday (March 1), will present 24 games (four of them preseason), 17 away and seven home. About 400,000 subscribers will be served on 40 cable systems. Systems in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area will have the option of seeing 40 pay-per-view home games. Outside the metropolitan area, those games will be available to basic subscribers.

Midwest Communications General Manager Bill Craig and Bob McGann, WCCO-TV station manager, both reported good ad sales so far. The major sponsors for both will be Anheuser-Busch and Norwest Bank. Former Twins pitcher Jim Kaat, who handled color commentary last year for WCCO(AM) and last year's broadcast TV outlet, KMSP-TV, will return to announce games for both broadcast and cable this year. He will be joined by play-by-play announcer Ted Robinson.

Audience shares for the Twins on radio reached into the 20's for some games last season, according to WCCO(AM)'s Vecellio. This year, 85% of the ad time has been sold for the 162 regular and 14 preseason games to be broadcast. The biggest sponsors are Anheuser-Busch, Chrysler, Amoco, Hardware Hank and Super Value grocery stores. Returning announcers will be Herb Carneal and John Gordon.

♦Oakland Athletics♦

Although the Oakland A's booming bats went quiet in the World Series last year, they remain "the showcase American League Team," boasting the 1988 Most Valuable Player, as well as manager, rookie and reliever of the year, said Fred Eppinger, national sales manager, KPIX(TV) San Francisco, flagship for an Oakland network of nine stations in California, Nevada and Arizona. Combined with the CBS affiliate's carriage of the NFL San Francisco 49'ers and NBA Golden State Warriors, holding the rights to the 1988 American League western division champions "enhances our identity as the sports leader in the market," he said. KPIX(TV) will carry a minimum of 28 regular season games, adding up to six more, as it did last season, if the team "comes close to clinching." Monte Moore and Ray Fosse will again call the games, and, as of last week, the possible addition of pre- and post-game shows was under consideration. The station is "well ahead of last year" in selling its inventory. "We have not lost any incumbents and are adding some new" advertisers, Eppinger said.

On radio, KSFO(AM) San Francisco enters the second year of a three-year deal by which the team pays for the broadcast time, while retaining ad sales, for 14 weekend preseason, and all 162 regular season, games. The station retains some time to promote the station, with the rest of in-game time sales up to A's broadcasting director David Rubenstein, said KSFO(AM) vice president and general manager Ken Dennis. Budweiser and Chevrolet are signed up, he said. Flagship for a 14-station network reaching California, Oregon, Utah and Nevada, KSFO(AM) does sell its own ad time in a plethora of Oakland A's-driven programs. Those programs include pre-

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game magazine and news shows, postgame wrapup and scoreboard shows, a morning manager's show and an evening call-in/talk show. Sc dedicated to A's programing is the station that, during the entire week of March 15, the morning drivetime (including hourly sports news from CBS-TV's NFL color announcer and former Oakland Raiders head coach John Madden) and evening drive-time broadcasts will originate from the A's Arizona preseason sites—"a very expensive operation, but we think it's worth it," said Dennis. Reprising their announcer roles from last year's championship season will be Lon Simmons and Bill King, visited "often" by color man Fosse from the TV announcing team.

♦Seattle Mariners♦

KSTW(TV) Tacoma, Wash., which had Mariners rights from 1982 to 1985, signed a three-year contract in December 1988 to regain the television rights to the Mariners from KIRO-TV and KTZZ-TV, both Seattle. KSTW-TV will offer 60 regular and 5 preseason games, all away contests. Kevin Hale, KSTW-TV vice president and general manager, plans on an eight-station network.

On March 13, KSTW(TV) will start a major promotional campaign using public transit, radio, newspapers and *TV Guide*. "We want fans to know the Mariners are back on ch. 11," said Hale. Advertisers signed include Anheuser-Busch, Unocal, and Cuprinol stain, with more pending, and, based on past history, said Hale, the station expects to be totally sold. Game announcers will be Dave Niehaus, the voice of the Mariners for the past 12 years, and Rick Rizzs. They will also handle radio coverage. Color analyst is Joe Simpson, who played with the Mariners from 1979 through 1982. No pre- or post-game shows are scheduled.

Hale said that no cable network is currently planned, although it remains a possibility.

KIRO(AM) Seattle, in the last year of a five-year contract, will cover 162 regular season, as well as preseason, games, over a network of approximately 30 stations. Advertisers, said Joe Abel, executive vice president and general manager, include Budweiser, Chevron, Farmer's Insurance, Pacific First Federal and Denny's. The station will come close to selling out, Abel said. Dave Niehaus and Rick Rizzs will announce the games, as well as handle pre- and post-game duties.

♦Texas Rangers♦

Texas Ranger baseball over Home Sports Entertainment (which also has pay cable rights to the Houston Astros) will be available to more than one million cable subscribers on 250 systems, most of them in Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma. HSE, a five-year-old network, has seen especially large expansion since the start of the 1987 season when games were carried over 121 systems to 225,000 viewers. This expansion has led to a list of about 20 major national advertisers that sponsor Ranger games. That list includes Anheuser-Busch, Chrysler, Texaco, AC Delco, American Express and Miller beer. Advertising "pretty much increases on a parallel with our subscriber numbers," said Jack Stanfield, HSE vice president, programing, and executive producer for Rangers baseball.

HSE will present 68 regular season games. In the past it has shown some preseason games between the Rangers and its minor league clubs, but this year HSE will not have any preseason games. Instead it will send a production crew to training camp to produce a special to air before opening day. During the season, regular half-hour pre- and post-game shows will be presented.

WBAP(AM), the radio rightsholder to the Rangers, is consistently one of the top five stations in listenership in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and baseball coverage is a main factor, according to John Hare, president and general manager. Last year the station averaged a 6.7 share during Ranger broadcasts, he said. He reported that ad sales are ahead of the same time last year. Ford, Delta Airlines and Gulf Oil are the major sponsors.

A schedule of 64 regular season games is being readied for KTVT(TV) Fort Worth, with one warm-up game in preseason also planned. The station's general manager, Charles Edwards, projected that ad sales will be up 12% over last year. Nevertheless, the station will "promote more extensively than we did last year, both on [its own] air and in other ways," Edwards said. One possible option would be to buy time on ESPN, he said. The largest advertisers signed so far are Anheuser-Busch, Burger King and True Value Hardware.

♦Baltimore Orioles♦

If ratings points fell off as much as the Baltimore Orioles' play did last year, WMAR-TV Baltimore might be giving away advertising time during its Orioles broadcasts this season. But as it happened, said Howard Zeiden, vice president of sales and marketing for the station, ratings did not experience "nearly the same slippage" as the last-place Orioles' performance did. (The team lost its first 21 games and finished 54-107.)

The station expects that its new play-by-play announcer will generate some excitement. He is Jim Palmer, the former Oriole and three-time Cy Young award winner who can recall the team's glorious past as he calls the uncertain present. Another ex-Bird, Hall of Famer Brooks Robinson, will return as color commentator. And, according to Zeiden, WMAR-TV sportscaster Scott Garceau will occasionally make it a threesome.

Home Team Sports, the regional cable network now reaching 1.2 million homes, under its long-term agreement with the team, will televise 85 regular-season games (65 home, 20 away) and five preseason games, matching last year's output. Mel Proctor and John Lowenstein, another former Oriole, return to handle the play-by-play and color for the cablecasts. Each game will again be preceded by *All Star Automotive Orioles Report* with Tom Davis.

WBAL(AM) Baltimore, in the second year of a three-year agreement, is committed to broadcasting every game, starting with last Friday's exhibition opener (March 3) against the Mets. The announcing team is the same as last year: Jon Miller and Joe Angel.

Jeff Beauchamp, manager of the Hearst station, said sales are "progressing well," but he conceded that the team's performance has discouraged some national advertisers, which do not reap the benefit of identifying with the team to the extent local advertisers do. Like HTS, WBAL's problem is beer. Beauchamp said Budweiser may not be back this season, forcing the station to find a new brewery to round out this year's advertisers. Budweiser is trying to trim back its broadcasting expenditures, he said, and may feel that its long-term contract with WMAR-TV is sufficient to cover the market. But the rest of the advertising line-up looks solid, according to Beauchamp. It includes Amer[illegible]n Oil, Jeep-Eagle, Sherwin-Williams, Esskay meats, Santoni's supermarkets, Amco transmission, Amana applicances and Trane heating and air conditioning.

♦Boston Red Sox♦

WSBK-TV Boston, entering its fourth year of a five-year contract with the Red Sox, will carry 75 regular season and three preseason games. Last year's broadcasts generated household ratings of 10-11, according to Stuart Tauber, the station's assistant general manager. About half the ad inventory for the upcoming season is sold out, he said, including deals with Anheuser-Busch, Mitsubishi, Delta, Citgo, Dodge, BF Goodrich, New England Ford Dealers and the Bank of New England. A network of New England television stations will receive 30-45 of the games, with the action described by Bob Montgomery and Sean McDonough.

New England Sports Network, a cable company partly owned by the Red Sox, will this season air 53 home, 30 road and 14 spring training games. Nielsen ratings on a key game last year revealed a 42 rating/63 share for the Red Sox in Boston, according to John Claiborne, vice president and general manager for the network, who said

such high numbers are not unusual for top games. Helping those ratings along is an increased subscriber base, which, he said, is up from last year's 217,884 to its current 303,000 figure. Claiborne said ad inventory, expected to be sold out by the start of the season, includes Budweiser, Jiffy Lube, New England Chevrolet, New England Nissan, Polaroid, Texaco, Store 24 and Century 21. Included among promotional tie-ins with advertisers will be a Budweiser-sponsored major league scoreboard read twice per game. NESN announcing duties this year will once again be handled by former Red Sox player Jerry Remy and 30-year veteran team announcer Ned Martin.

Radio coverage for the Red Sox will once again be handled by WPLM-AM-FM Plymouth, Mass. The station will originate 81 home, 81 away and 22 preseason games to a network of more than 80 stations. A station spokesman said major advertisers will include Budweiser, American Motors and Chrysler. Returning announcers will be Ken Coleman and Joe Castiglione.

♦Cleveland Indians♦

This is the 10th year that WUAB-TV Lorain, Ohio, holds the rights to the Cleveland Indian games. The station will air 60 contests (50 away and 10 home) and has sold about 50% of its advertising inventory. Among the major sponsors are Anheuser-Busch and Wendy's, said Bill Scaffide, assistant general manager. Scaffide said the station received an average 13 rating/22 share last season and expects to do better in 1989. The Indians, he said, have "made themselves very competitive," and interest in the team is picking up. Jack Corrigan will do the play-by-play, and the station is negotiating with several people for the color commentary slot, according to Scaffide.

WWWE(AM) Cleveland is the flagship for a 30-station radio network. It has been broadcasting the games since 1972 and, as with WUAB-TV, Anheuser-Busch is a leading sponsor. The station plans to broadcast 162 games along with 16 spring training games, said WWWE's David George. It also will air a 20-minute pre-game show called *Countdown to Baseball* and a 15-minute post-game show, *Final Edition*. Herb Score will call the play-by-play and Paul Olden will provide color. According to Tom Campbell, the station has sold about 90% of its network inventory and 70% of the local avails.

No Indians games are carried on cable.

♦Detroit Tigers♦

WDIV(TV) Detroit will present nine home, 43 away and five preseason games this season, as the station enters the first year of a new three-year contract. Ad inventory is about 80% sold out, said Chris Rohrs, vice president of marketing and station manager. Advertisers include Anheuser-Busch (new this year), Ford Dealers, Taco Bell, Kroger Supermarkets, Pepsi, Blue Cross, General Electric and Unocal. Sportscasters are Al Kaline and George Kell, and Bernie Smilovitz will host 40 half-hour pregame shows.

Ann Arbor-based Pro Am Sports Systems will provide 20 away, 55 home and one preseason game via cable. About 70% of the cable ad inventory is sold, according to General Manager Bill Wischman, including deals with Ford, Stroh's, Highland Appliance, Sprint, GMAC, General Electric and True Value hardware stores. The service will provide a full lineup of Tigers-oriented programing on March 17, including a feature on former Tigers called *Tigers at Heart*. The subscriber base is 540,000, said Wischman. Returning announcers will be Jim Northrup and Larry Osterman.

Tigers radio coverage this season will be handled by WJR(AM) Detroit, now in the third year of a five-year contract. The station will carry all 182 games, including 20 preseason matches, beginning March 3. Advertising sales are ahead of last year, said General Sales Manager Mike Fezzey, including commitments from Anheuser-Busch, Ford Dealers, Comerica Bank and Marathon Oil.

♦Milwaukee Brewers♦

WCGV-TV Milwaukee is in the first year of a three-year contract to broadcast Milwaukee Brewers games. The station, which retains all broadcast TV rights, has lined up five affiliates so far for a regional network. Major advertisers include Miller Brewing, Hardee's and Northwest Airlines. Calling play-by-play for the eight pre-season and 60 regular-season games will be Jim Paschke. Joining him to do color will be ex-Brewer pitcher Pete Vukovich.

The Brewers retain radio rights and have a network of approximately 67 stations in 51 markets. WTMJ(AM) is the flagship station for the broadcasts of 162 regular season games and 18 preseason games. Bob Uecker, recovering from a mild heart attack in January, is scheduled to be in the booth for his 19th, and the team's 20th, year, said William Haig, vice president, broadcast operations, Milwaukee Brewers Radio. Pat Hughes will be with him for his fifth year.

♦New York Yankees♦

The New York Yankees' new television contract was noteworthy, both for the amount of money involved, a reported $500 million over 12 years, and for the fact that, starting in 1991, rights to all the games will pass to cable. The latter fact has aroused some local politicians to consider legislating over-the-air-carriage of some of the

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team's games.

Madison Square Garden signed the contract only two months ago, and details of its 1989 telecast of four preseason and 72 regular season games are still being worked out. The cable network is negotiating the Yankee telecasts separately with MSG affiliates, who reach 2.4 million homes, asking them to pay a 39% surcharge on top of the regular monthly 80 cents per-sub fee. The uncertainty over how many cable operators will accept the price increase may contribute to MSG's delay in announcing advertisers. The cable network is still also interviewing potential announcers for the telecasts, which include a half-hour pregame and a 15-minute post-game show.

WPIX(TV) New York will increase the number of games broadcast this year to 78 (three preseason and 75 regular) from 52 in 1988, when they averaged a seven rating, said Marty Appel, executive producer. Veteran on-air personality and former Yankee shortstop Phil Rizzuto will be joined by two new announcers: George Grande, who comes to the station from ESPN, and Tom Seaver, who replaced Bill White, recently named president of the National League.

WABC(AM) New York renegotiated its agreement, adding an additional five years to the remaining three years of its current contract, said general manager Fred Weinhaus. The ABC-owned station will originate the entire regular season and about 15 of the pre-season games to a network of about 50 stations, including stations as far away as Phoenix and Houston. Weinhaus said the station had only a few minutes of advertising time left and expected ad sales this year to be "a million and half more than 1988 sales." Major advertisers include Budweiser, Marine Midland Bank and Nissan. Announcers for the games are John Sterling and Jay Johnstone.

♦Toronto Blue Jays♦

The Sports Network, which held the cable rights last year for the Blue Jays, was, last month, in the process of negotiating for them again this year. The network would likely run four preseason games and 50 regular season games, said a spokesman. Blue Jays announcer Fergie Olver will provide play-by-play, and former Blue Jays catcher Buck Martinez, color. Major sponsors are Labatts, Esso and Coca-Cola.

TV Labatt, a division of Labatt Brewing Co., owner of 45% of the Blue Jays, holds the television rights for the team. In the fifth year of its six-year contract with TV Labatt, CTV Television Network will be airing 42 regular season games hosted by Olver, with Don Chevrier doing play by play and Tony Kubek doing color.

Telemedia Broadcasting Systems holds the radio rights to the Blue Jays and is in the last year of a three-year contract, but has signed another contract for the following three years. The flagship station for the network of more than 60 radio stations is Toronto's CJCL(AM), owned by the same parent company. National advertisers include Labatts, McDonalds, Blacks Cameras, Zenith and Miracle Food Mart.

♦Atlanta Braves♦

The number of Braves games on WTBS(TV) Atlanta is still being worked out, but will likely be around 120, which will be a drop from last year's 135. Turner's carriage of the National Basketball Association cuts into a number of Braves games in May.

Ron Snyder, director of sports sales for WTBS, reports that "Braves sales are healthy" despite last year's last-place finish. The team scored a 2.2 cable rating over its schedule last year. Snyder said advertisers signed include Anheuser-Busch, Delta Air Lines and Ford, a new sponsor this year.

WSB(AM) Atlanta is in the first year of a new three-year rights agreement to carry all 162 regular season and 10 preseason games on a 93-station network. WSB(AM) has carried the Braves in 22 of the last 23 seasons. Bob Huntley, general sales manager for the station, said sales are going "very well," with Budweiser, Delta Air Lines and Coca-Cola signed. Under the new contract, the station purchased the rights and is responsible for putting together the six-state network.

♦Cincinnati Reds♦

Now in its 28th consecutive year of covering Cincinnati Reds baseball, WLWT(TV) Cincinnati will broadcast 47 games this season. The station, which retains Reds baseball rights, is in the second year of a three-year contract and is the flagship for a 23-station network. In addition to the 47 games, the station also has an option to broadcast three additional games. Ad sales are going "very well," said Tony Kiernan, the station's vice president and general manager. Major advertisers include Anheuser-Busch, Toyota, Kroger Supermarkets and Ford Dealers.

Radio coverage of Reds baseball will be handled by WLW(AM) Cincinnati, in the first year of a three-year contract. The station, which holds the radio rights, will air 18 exhibition games and 162 regular season games, including any post-season games. It is the flagship for a 75-station network. According to David Martin, president and general manager of the station, ad sales have been "quite brisk," with 85%-90% of the inventory sold. Major advertisers include Anheuser-Busch, Marathon Oil, Community Mutual, Pepsi-Cola and Delta.

In their 16th year of calling Reds baseball for WLW(AM), Joe Nuxhall and Marty Brennaman return to the booth for the station. Marty Brennaman is the father of WLWT(TV) announcer Tom Brennaman. The station will produce two pre-game shows and two post-game shows. Each of the shows will be approximately seven minutes and will include interviews with players and manager Pete Rose.

♦Houston Astros♦

Astros television rightsholder KTXH(TV) Houston will broadcast 73 away games and 11 exhibition games this year. Sponsors include Anheuser-Busch, Kroger and Southwestern Bell. Sales are "pacing well ahead" of a year ago, said Julio Bermudez, station general manager.

KTRH(AM) Houston will again carry the full slate of Astro games, although the rights are retained by the team, which sells the time. Radio sponsors this season include Anheuser-Busch, Kroger, Coca-Cola, Delta, Western Auto and Ford Lifetime Service. Nissan and Subaru are competing for the automobile sponsorship.

Home Sports Entertainment just renegotiated a long-term (more than 10 years) deal with the ball club and will carry all 80 Astros home games this season. The Astros will also have about 25 games on Florida's Sunshine Network this season. However, with the new ESPN contract, Astros participation in the Sunshine Network would cease after this season.

♦Los Angeles Dodgers♦

KTTV(TV) and KABC(AM), both Los Angeles, enter the second year of five-year contracts with the Dodgers for broadcast rights. KABC(AM) also holds the Spanish radio rights, which it subleases to KWKW(AM) Pasadena. KABC(AM) coordinates a regional radio network of 25 English stations and five Spanish stations. Major sponsors include Unocal, Coca-Cola, Anheuser-Busch, Nissan and Farmer John Meats.

KTTV will broadcast four preseason games and 46 regular season away games. The station has hired former Dodger pitcher Don Sutton to do a pre-game show this season called *Dodger Central*, debuting yesterday, March 5. Sutton provides color commentary along with the team of Vin Scully, Don Drysdale and/or Ross Porter. Major television sponsors include Anheuser-Busch, Unocal, Coca-Cola, Farmer John, Jeep Eagle and Pacific Bell.

Z Channel, which two weeks ago became New York-based Rainbow Program Enterprises' seventh regional cable sports network (BROADCASTING, Feb. 27), will carry 35 Dodger home games this season. Z Channel, which is not permitted by the Dodgers to sell ad time within the games, said a Rainbow spokesman, also carries California Angels games.

♦San Diego Padres♦

For the third year in a row, the Padres will purchase time on television and its English-language radio affiliate, retaining the rights and selling all the local advertising itself. Jim Winters, director of broadcasting for the team, said the arrangement continues to work well for the Padres. Although time is not sold out, Winters said sales are running as strong as last year.

The Padres are buying time on KUSI-TV San Diego for the two preseason and 49 regular season games that will be fed to a 10-station network that will include outlets in Hawaii. The team controls the advertising in the pre- and post-game programs. Among advertisers signed are Anheuser-Busch, Toyota Motor Sales and Dealers Jack in the Box and Taco Bell.

KFMB(AM) San Diego will carry 192 pre- and regular season games on a 12-station radio network. The station is in the last year of a four-year deal with the Padres. Radio advertisers include Chevron, Coca-Cola, Toyota, Home Federal, Lucky Stores, Chrysler-Plymouth and Farmer's Insurance. The Padres sell the Spanish-language rights to XEXX(AM) Tijuana, Mexico, which keeps the ad avails, and feeds a 17-station network.

The Padres are in the last year of a three-year deal with Cox Cable for pay-per-view coverage, in an arrangement by which the team and Cox split the profits. Winter said that although the Padres continue to make money on the venture, overall revenue has declined steadily since 1984-85. Cox distributes the games to several other systems in the area, giving the Padres a combined reach of 300,000 addressable homes.

♦San Francisco Giants♦

KTVU(TV) Oakland, Calif., returns this year to Giants baseball with a new six-year contract. The station, which holds the broadcast TV rights, is flagship for a five-station network. The Fox-affiliate will air one preseason game and 50 regular season games, 10 more regular season games than last year. According to Brooke Spectorsky, station manager, ad sales are "very healthy, much better than last year at this time." Major advertisers are Toyota and Anheuser-Busch. The first-year announcing team includes Hank Greenwald calling play-by-play and Duane Kuiper and Ron Farley providing color and analysis.

KNBR(AM) San Francisco also has a new six-year contract as radio carrier of Giants baseball. The station, which last year completed its second consecutive five-year contract, will carry 15 preseason games and 162 regular season contests. The station will feed a network of 10 stations. Major advertisers include Anheuser-Busch, Chevron, Nissan, Farmer's Insurance and Northern California Pontiac dealers. The station is running a co-promotion with Nissan whereby a fan will be selected to receive $100 for each run scored by the Giants in a particular inning. Color commentator Ron Fairly returns to the announcing booth along with Hank Greenwald. The station will produce two pre-game shows and two post-game shows, totaling 20 minutes each. The pre-game shows include *The Roger Craig Show* (coach of the Giants), sponsored by Procter & Gamble.

The Giants will offer a 36-game cable package. In addition to the $150 package, the team also offers games to cable subscribers on a pay-per-view basis, for $5.95-$7.95 per game. According to Eva Bustos, director of Giantsvision, Giantsvision totals 73 systems serving about 1.6 million subscribers. Bustos said the cable service is growing at a rate of "about 200,000 subscribers and 10 systems each year." Duane Kuiper and Joe Morgan will handle the announcing chores.

♦Chicago Cubs♦

WGN Continental Broadcasting has been broadcasting Cubs games since 1948. Superstation WGN-TV will carry 152 games, including all 81 home games and four in the preseason. WGN-TV reaches more than 25 million homes nationally on cable systems.

Jake Fendley, the station's director of sports sales, said the games are about 75% sold out. Major sponsors include Anheuser-Busch, Nissan, Buick, *The Chicago Tribune*, Unocal Oil Co., Pepsi-Cola, United Airlines and True Value Hardware. The pregame show, *Leadoff Man*, is sponsored by Chicagoland Chevrolet Dealer Association. The post-game show, *Tenth Inning*, is sponsored by the Chrysler-Plymouth Dealer Association.

Harry Caray, 1989 Ford Frick award winner, will handle play-by-play for six innings, Dewayne Staats will cover play-by-play for three, and Steve Stone will be providing color.

WGN(AM) will broadcast 163 games, including the Cubs-White Sox exhibition game and 12 other preseason games. The Cubs will be broadcast to a network of 83 stations in 16 states. The games are 70% sold out, which, according to the station, "is an about an average Cubs' selling year." Sponsors include G. Heileman Brewing, Marathon Oil Co. and Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois. There is a 30-minute pregame show, *Scouting Report*, which has a magazine format. Staats handles play-by-play for six innings on radio, with Caray covering play-by-play for three innings and Dave Nelson on color.

♦Montreal Expos♦

Labatts Beer begins the fourth year of a five-year contract this season, holding both TV and cable rights for the Montreal Expos. Coverage in bilingual Canada will be split into networks of English and French broadcasts. Handling English radio broadcasts for the Expos is CJAD(AM) Montreal, this year in the first year of a three-year contract with a fourth-year option. The station will air all 162 regular season games, eight preseason contests and the All Star game. French broadcasts will again be heard over CKAC(AM) Montreal. Major advertisers for both stations include Labatts and General Motors. English broadcasts are done by Dave Van Horne, Jerry Trupiano and Bobby Winkles. For the French broadcasts, Jacques Doucets and Rodger Broulette will handle announcing duties.

CTV Television Network affiliate CFCF-TV Montreal will broadcast 40 regular season games this year (19 home and 21 road). CTV Television Network also airs the Toronto Blue Jays. Van Horne, Ken Singleton and Ron Reusch handle the broadcasts for the station.

The Sports Network provides cable coverage of the Expos, reaching close to two million subscribers, said Jim Thompson, vice president and general manager. The network is currently renegotiating its contract, but, said Thompson, plans to show 44 Expos games (four preseason) this year. Next year TSN will go from a "discretionary," or pay, cable service to a basic service and subsequently will air only 25 Expos games. The fewer games, however, will reach more subscribers, he said. Play-by-play coverage for TSN is done by Singleton and Jim Hughson.

♦New York Mets♦

SportsChannel, in the eighth year of a long-term contract extending beyond the year 2000, is still in litigation with the Mets over rights fees. The contract is for both the New York area, where SportsChannel reaches 1.1 million subscribers, and for Florida, where SportsChannel Florida will carry some of the games to its 750,000 subs. This year the cable sports network will carry 75 games, announced by former players Rusty Staub, Ralph Kiner and Fran Healy. Rich Kahn, spokesman for SportsChannel, said time on the games was 88% sold to advertisers including Anheuser-Busch, Toyota, Buick, TWA, Texaco, Metropolitan Life, JeepEagle and Manufacturers Hanover Trust.

With another three years on its contract, WWOR(TV) Secaucus, N.J., this year will air 75 regular season and seven preseason games. Station spokesperson Ellen Mor-

genstern said the list of stations for a regional Mets broadcast network is "still coming together." Total household ratings for last year's telecasts averaged a 9 rating/21 share, with prime time games averaging a 10.2/20. Advertisers include Anheuser-Busch, and announcers will be Tim McCarver and Steve Zabriskie.

WFAN(AM) New York, in the third year of a four-year contract, will carry 22 preseason and all regular season games. Station General Manager Scott Meier said a network of about 22 stations will also carry the broadcasts, which will be announced by Bob Murphy, Gary Cohen and Howie Rose. Meier said advertising sales are progressing "very well" and include Anheuser-Busch, Chrysler and Crazy Eddie.

♦Philadephia Phillies♦

According to Ray Tipton, executive producer of Phillies Baseball for WTAF-TV Philadelphia, 90 games will be broadcast this season—5 preseason, 85 regular season. Regional cable sports channel Prism will air 40 regular season games (33 home, 7 away). WCAU(AM) plans to air 20 preseason games and all regular season games.

WTAF-TV is in the seventh year of an 11-year arrangement running through 1992. The station retains rights but shares advertising revenue with the team. Principal advertisers will be Anheuser-Busch and First Pennsylvania Bank.

WCAU(AM)'s 11-year contract runs through 1993. The station has had a 23-station network. Chris Witting, vice president and general manager, expects that number to grow this season. Major advertisers include Chevrolet and Anheuser-Busch.

Prism has been showing Phillies games since 1976 and is currently in the fourth year of an eight-year contract. Prism pays a rights fee but the Phillies retain and sell advertising time, some pre-sold to Anheuser-Busch, Blue Cross-Blue Shield and Mister Goodbuys (hardware franchise).

Harry Kalas, Richie Ashburn and Andy Musser handle play-by-play and color commentary for radio, TV and cable. Garry Maddox and Chris Wheeler contribute color for cable.

♦Pittsburgh Pirates♦

"It went great." That is Dean Jordan's assessment of the Pirates' first year as the producer of the team's radio broadcasts. Jordan, director of broadcasting for the second-place NL East finishers, said sales and profits from the broadcasts exceeded expectations.

Prior to last season, the Pirates sold the radio rights each year to KDKA(AM), Group W's clear-channel powerhouse. But, figuring it could earn more and promote the team better, it decided to retain the rights starting with 1989, produce the games and sell the time. KDKA remains the flagship of the team's radio network, carrying the games in the second year of a three-year agreement. The radio network has grown under the team's direction. Last year, the number of stations in the networks jumped from 27 to 40. The Pirates have added at least four more stations for the upcoming season.

Major advertisers for the radio broadcasts include Budweiser, Mellon Bank, Jeep-Eagle, Giant Eagle supermarkets, Sears, Donnelly Directories, Nissan and K Mart.

The Pirates have sold the broadcast television rights to KDKA-TV. In the second year of a two-year agreement, the Group W station will broadcast 48 regular season games (40 away, eight home)—two more than last year—and two preseason games. The station has put together a network comprising six other stations. The contract between the team and that station has an option for a third year, which has to be executed by Sept. 1, according to Jordan.

Judging from advance advertising sales, Hal Whack, general sales manager, KDKA-TV, is anticipating "an excellent year." Preseason sales, he said, have already surpassed sales for the entire 1987 season. Whack attributed the healthy sales to the Pirates' performance and creative cross-promotional activities involving the team, advertisers and the station.

Television advertisers include Anheuser-Busch, Giant Eagle, Bell Atlantic, Equibank, Eat 'N' Park, Sunoco, Chevrolet, McDonald's, Cameron Coca-Cola, Pizza Hut, Pittsburgh Paints, The Appliance Store and the Pennsylvania State Lottery.

The team is in the final year of a three-year agreement with Tele-Communications Inc.'s regional sports service, KBL Entertainment Network. Under the deal, KBL will televise 60 regular season games (33 away and 27 home) and three preseason games, one on April 1 against the Baltimore Orioles from Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium in Washington.

The deal, which has a two-year option clause, is complex, involving TCI's purchasing of large blocks of tickets each year, and is dependent on the teams' on-field performance.

The same four announcers are back from last year to handle the cablecasts and broadcasts: Lanny Fratare, John Sanders, Steve Blass and Jim Rooker.

♦St. Louis Cardinals♦

"The Cardinals are one of the top franchises year in and year out," said Robert Fullstone, vice president and general manager, KPLR-TV, which is celebrating 30 years on the air this spring. The station, in the second year of a three-year contract, will offer 60 games, the majority away, including opening day in New York against the Mets and the home opener.

Leading advertisers on board include Anheuser-Busch, Central Hardware, Schnuck's (a food retailer), Hardee's and True Value Hardware. Fullstone said that ad inventory sales are currently ahead of last year, when it came close to selling out. A network of 32 stations in nine states, "one of the biggest in baseball," he said, will reach an estimated 10.5 million homes, about one million more than last year, according to Dan Cohen, KPLR-TV research director. Game announcers will be former Cardinal pitcher Al Hrabosky and Ken Wilson. Although the station does no actual pre- or post-game shows, *The Whitey Herzog Show* will air each Sunday night at 9:30 p.m. and feature the former manager analyzing the week's baseball events. On the air now is the *Hot Stove League*, a baseball discussion program.

At this year's Association of Independent Television Stations convention, according to Fullstone, KPLR-TV received honorable mention for its Cardinals sales kit and on-air promo spots, and won the outdoor display category for its inflatable bat and ball.

KMOX(AM), the flagship station of a 130-station network, plans to cover all 162 regular season games as well as preseason activity, according to General Manager Robert Hyland. The station, which has been covering the games for "at least the last quarter century," has three years to go on its current contract.

Advertisers include Anheuser-Busch, Chevrolet, Schnuck's, Missouri Lottery, Marco Sales, Car Quest and United Van Lines. Hyland reports that all pre- and post-game shows, along with 80% of the "in-game" inventory, have been sold. Pre- and post-game coverage will be handled by former Cardinals pitcher Bob Gibson, as well as by game announcers Jack Buck and Mike Shannon. Ballpark promotional efforts have been planned with the team.

Cencom Cable Associates will program 50 home games on the Cardinals Cable Network, which is entering its fourth year carrying the team, beginning April 16 against the Mets. The games will reach 300,000 cable homes via seven affiliate cable systems in the metropolitan St. Louis area, according to John Clark, Cencom's vice president, marketing and programing. Clark also expects 3,000 individual cable homes to take advantage of pay per view, in addition to 12,000 full-season package subscribers. Cencom is in the second year of its second contract, with an option for a third year in 1990. Leading advertisers are Schnuck's and local GMC dealers, and Clark expects to repeat last year's ad inventory sellout. Cencom will have pre- and post-game shows. ■

Florida in Orlando in May 1990.

The Nickelodeon facilities will consist of two sound stages, approximately 16,500 square feet with audience seating for more than 250 people, and a children's interactive play area. Most of the network's programing will be produced at the new studios, including *Super Sloppy Double Dare*, *Think Fast*, *Kid's Court* and a weekend variety show. Other shows will be announced shortly.

Universal Studios Florida is a joint venture of MCA Inc. and Cineplex Odeon Corp. Nickelodeon and Nick at Nite are registered trademarks of MTV Networks, a division of Viacom International.

Opinion poll

Marquest Research, which said it interviewed senior executives at 17 of the top 25 MSO's, has found only lukewarm support for CNBC. It said eight of the 17 planned minimal or no carriage, four plan moderate carriage and three say they would offer broad carriage. Marquest said the data were similar to findings on the same question asked last June and September.

There was greater pleasure expressed over the Cablevision-NBC deal to put a number of 1992 Olympic events on PPV. Marquest said 13 of the 17 interviewed were pleased with the plans. But Marquest said that while there was widespread support for the PPV venture, "the few dissenters felt strongly that it would be a mistake."

Of 10 established cable networks, the survey identified Arts & Entertainment, USA and FNN as improving their programing the most over the past year, Marquest said.

CTAM reorganization

The Cable Television Administrative & Marketing Society's mid-Atlantic chapter has announced its reorganization into four chapters: New York, Philadelphia, Washington/Baltimore and Boston. The last will be formed later this spring.

The four chapters will be overseen by the Northeast Regional Board of Directors, whose president is Bob Townsend, vice president, marketing, NYT Cable. The NRBD will oversee CTAM involvement at regional shows and conferences and coordinate production of national CTAM programs such as the general manager achievement series. Each chapter will also have its own board.

The Washington/Baltimore chapter held its first official meeting last week, which was attended by more than 160 people. Sam Street, president of United Cable in Baltimore, is chapter president. The chapter is one of 11 overall that CTAM plans to have active by year's end.

Go west

The Weather Channel will begin offering 30 minutes per hour of weather reports specific to the West Coast between 7:57 p.m. and 10:57 p.m. each evening beginning today (Feb. 20). The programing will be a part of the Weather Channel's national feed. The West Coast reports will be divided into three regions, Southern California, Northern California and Oregon/Washington. The local forecasts for each region will include an on-camera meteorologist, live radar updates and forecasts.

Sub status

Nielsen has released a coverage report ending Jan. 22, 1989, which lists the subscriber numbers for all the basic cable services it meters. The figures below are derived from multiplying the percentage reach figures Nielsen released by the 90.4 million U.S. television households.

Service	Subscribers (millions)
ESPN	50.2
CNN	49.6
WTBS(TV)	48.3
USA	46.8
MTV	44.8
Nickelodeon	44.1
Nashville Network	43.8
CBN Family Network	42.2
Lifetime	42.1
Nick at Nite	40.7
Discovery	38.7
Weather Channel	37.6
A&E (night)	37.1
CNN Headline News	35.3
A&E (day)	33.0
Financial News Network	32.3
VH-1	30.3
BET	21.5

Babar on HBO

HBO will debut a 13-part series based on the children's storybook character, Babar, beginning Sunday, April 2, at 8 p.m. The series recounts the adventures of King Babar, Queen Celeste and their subjects and is based on the 28 books written by Jean and Laurent de Brunhoff, plus several new tales.

Graduated level

Mind Extension University has added a master's degree in business administration to its list of college-level coursework. Jones International, coporate parent of MEU announced. Cable subscribers can take college-level courses through the service, affiliated with Colorado State University. MEU reaches four million cable subscribers. The MBA program will begun this fall.

Political education

The Learning Channel will air an interview with Vice President Dan Quayle as part of its *What I've Learned* interview program. The Quayle interview, in which he discusses SDI, the "You're no Jack Kennedy" quip from the 1988 campaign and how vice presidential life has changed his family, is set to be carried on March 19 at 9:30 p.m. ET.

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